

April 5, 2006

Hello,

I am writing to express serious concern regarding the issue of Wal-Mart Banks. I bank at a locally owned bank. I do so deliberately. This serves to keep money in the city and state in which I live. It helps to preserve and support the local economy in my community. I am concerned that, with Wal-Mart's power, size and track record, that communities will suffer on every level. The stores alone have forced small local businesses to close; pharmacies, food stores, etc...I have seen my town become divided more and more between the haves and used to haves. There is not a week that passes, that I do not notice another small locally owned business....gone. Empty store fronts, lack of choice in how and where local money goes. To permit the largest corporate entity in the world to own a bank would create a commercial and financial power that would devastate local communities. I strongly urge you to closely examine the future impact of Wal-Mart Banks. Please attend the hearings and do right by the people; help us to build our community, not give it away to Wal-Mart. Thank you for considering my thoughts and ideas on this most crucial decision that you must make.

Lauren Charlap-Hyman, M.A.